PEOPLE OF THE LAND

SkyRealms of Jorune™

BY DAN BEYER OF SKYREALMS PUBLISHING

Welcome back to Jorune! The new Third Edition **SkyRealms of Jorune** has been released, and we are here in White Wolf this month to make your gaming richer with a look at a new occupational class and the environment in which it belongs.

MARSH-RUNNERS ("MEIRSH")

There are two types of marsh-runners, or "meirsh" (pronounced "me-Air-sh"). The regular meirsh make their living exploring and harvesting the great swamps and marshes of Jorune. They collect anything worth yules, usually focusing on limilates, fish, and creatures. Bio-tec meirsh specialize in collecting bio-tec, especially recos. Though most incupod fields are not found in swamps, the name "meirsh" has attached itself to both occupations. Usually meirsh are hired on a long-term contractual basis to limilate houses, restaurants, Iscin laboratories and schools, and other businesses which need the raw materials found in the marshes. Meirsh of both types can be hired for individual jobs. In cities, most meirsh can be found in the incleps that cater to explorers.

MEIRSH

Meirsh are individuals who love the marshes and the money that can be earned from them. Many meirsh live in or near towns or cities. They are generally comfortable in both urban areas and the wilderness, unlike their occupational cousins the jungle-runners. The strong, tangy, and slightly unpleasant scent of the marshes clings to the meirsh, and is easily recognized by those they meet. Most meirsh have a specialty, such as marsh limilates or creatures. Some eventually save enough money to open their own storefronts.

Meirsh		Cost	6
Extra Skill Rank Points	+2	Min Agility	13
Extra Characteristic Points	+2	Min Spot	13
		Min Listen	13

Skills Gained:

- ✦Flora at Experienced
- ✦Fauna at Experienced
- ✦Sword at Experienced
- ✦Weather at Familiar
- ✦Silent Move at Experienced
- ✦Conceal Self at Familiar
- ✦First Aid at Familiar
- ✦Geography at Familiar
- ✦Bargaining at Familiar
- ✦Foraging at Familiar

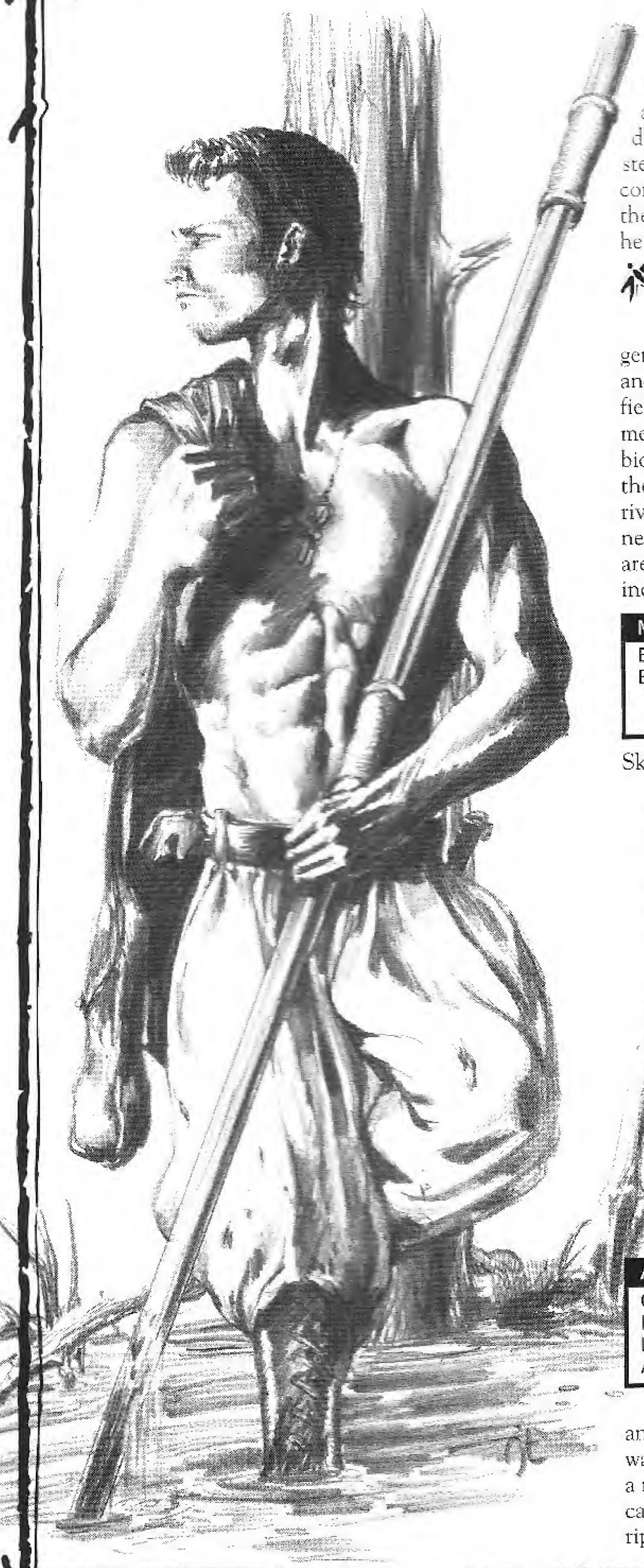
Choose 1 roll 6 for another:

- ✦Thikes at Familiar
- ✦Limilate Finding at Experienced
- ✦Creature Care at Familiar
- ✦Fishing at Familiar
- ✦Set Traps at Experienced
- ✦Tracking at Experienced
- ✦Limilate Preparation at Familiar
- ✦Blount or Salu Interaction at Familiar

CHARACTER TEMPLATE

Grent Hollman					Human Meirsh
Constitution	12	Social	11	Color	13
Isho	14	Strength	12	Education	11
Learn	12	Agility	14	Speed	16
Aim	12	Spot	15	Listen	16

Dawn opened its eye on the horizon of the bay. Dark specks flew in organized flocks across the blazing orange and purple skyline. "It's amazing how they stay in that formation," thought Grent as he fingered his silvered Drenn challisk. The delta boat rocked slightly. Quickly, Grent grabbed his sword, and waited. In the wastes of the Ardoth Delta there were no waves. Nothing that could rock his boat, except for.... *Craaak!*



The floorboards of the little dinghy exploded upward and out as a meter-long snout crashed through the wood. Instinctively, Grent leapt aside and slashed with his sword. The blade struck home and bile-colored ichor splashed. The impossibly large dhamarc flailed about in pain and anger. Grent steadied himself and drew his blaster pistol. Micro-computer aided laser sights winked to life as he brought the pistol to bear on the beast. "I've only got one shot," he thought as he squeezed the trigger.

Bio-tech Meirsh

Bio-tec Meirsh are more technically trained than general meirsh. They specialize in finding, marking, and even harvesting wild incupod fields. Wild incupod fields can be especially dangerous; it is uncommon to meet a bio-tech meirsh who still has all his digits. Most bio-tec meirsh are not fully trained Iscin, although there are some whose intimate knowledge of bio-tec rivals those with the title. Bio-tec meirsh is a relatively new occupation, and there are not many of them. Most are attached directly to a research institute or an incuhut.

Meirsh		Cost	8
Extra Skill Rank Points	+2	Min Agility	12
Extra Characteristic Points	+3	Min Speed	13
		Min Spot	11
		Min Education	13

Skills Gained:

- ✦Flora at Experienced
- ✦Fauna at Experienced
- ✦Sword at Experienced
- ✦Crossbow at Familiar
- ✦Weather at Familiar
- ✦Silent Move at Experienced
- ✦Conceal self at Familiar
- ✦Geography at Familiar
- ✦Bio-tech at Familiar

Choose 1 roll 6 for another:

- ✦Thikes at Familiar
- ✦Limilate Preparation at Familiar
- ✦Geography at Familiar
- ✦Set Traps at Experienced
- ✦Limilate Finding at Experienced
- ✦Foraging at Familiar

Character Template

Andia Ketterem				Human Bio-tec Meirsh	
Constitution	13	Social	12	Color	8
Isho	11	Strength	14	Education	15
Learn	13	Agility	17	Speed	15
Aim	10	Spot	16	Listen	14

Andia pulled the brim of her brown hat in nervous anticipation. "It's just like 'em. Never pop when you want 'em to." She shifted her weight slightly to prevent a muscle cramp. Around her, the afternoon sunlight cast a gold aura over the surrounding trees, grasses, and ripe incupods. The large inverted melons were bloated

and moving. Most were greenish, but the one which attracted her attention had strong streaks of orange and red down its sides. With a slight "pop," the birthing membrane split and the incupod began to peel away. Andia reached into her side bag and drew a bit of cankle, the "reco candy" that recos cannot resist. The reco was a coiled mass of yellow and red scales. It began unknotting itself in sinewy coils. Its tentacles ended in sharp barbs dripping with gel. Andia backed up quickly. The central body appeared to be a mouth surrounded by five tentacles, almost like a starfish. It made great wheezing sounds as it began to slither. Andia hurled the cankle at the reco and bolted, trusting her quick speed and the cankle. Minutes later she was clear of the field. She returned after an hour to find the whole incupod field ripped to shreds, mutilated reco parts everywhere. As she investigated the slaughter, she found the cankle she had thrown– undisturbed–and began to shudder.

Meirsh in Ardoth

Many meirsh of both types reside in Ardoth, since the majority of these marsh explorers earn their living harvesting the great marsh to the south of the city. Most live in the Fisherman's Quarters. The most successful among them live in the South Homes neighborhood. Some meirsh keep a permanent city apartment, but camp in the marshes or delta during the main harvest times of Eris and Mullin. Harvest time finds meirsh enjoying city life just long enough to sell their catch in the Quarters, restock, and head back to the swamps. Meirsh stand out in a crowd at harvest time; the marsh odor they carry is heavy and takes several hours of soaking (in herbal bath waters) to eliminate. Some meirsh have taken to soaking in the tanker bins usually reserved for blount and salu. They are welcomed in the bins; both water-dwelling races find their company refreshing.

The bio-tec meirsh usually work for incuhuts or the Institute. Currently, all bio-tec meirsh are directed to report any new or unusual findings in incupod fields to the appropriate agencies. They always carry cankle with them to throw at dangerous recos. Most of their collecting consists of corks and busks, but an occasional mutant reco makes a fine prize. Most bio-tec meirsh live in the Arkin neighborhoods. Their excursions usually take them to the Gloundan forest or other places far away from Ardoth.

Cankle

Cankle is a grayish-brown food designed to distract recos. It is produced by the suppliers in the Gauss Valley, and at Copra Shin-Fadri (The Institute). It is then sold directly to meirsh. Rumor has it that the Institute found the "recipe" for cankle in ancient writings. Cankle is odorless. Copra Shin-Fadri brand cankle is soft and pulpy and can be pulled into little fleshy globs rather easily. The competing cankle of the Gauss Valley is gray-green, brittle, and easily broken into chunks. This cankle also has been speculated to speed up the reco reproductive process, but this is undergoing further investigation.

When confronted with cankle, recos will stop what they are doing and feast on the candy until it is gone. Cankle can be eaten somewhat safely by other races, but it produces a feeling of faint nausea (-1 on all rolls for an hour after swallowing). It does provide the same nourishment as durlig, but tastes many times worse than even the rotted stuff. Despite its mild toxicity, there are some meirsh who become cankle addicts and eat it as trail food.

The Ardothian Delta

Directly outside the southern wall of the city, the land becomes marshy. A branch of the Cryshell river flows south with multiple branches breaking east. They mix with the bay in the tidal zone, and thereby form the Ardoth Delta. The Ardoth Delta is a fresh-to-saltwater marsh that extends about two miles inland from the bay for a few miles south of Ardoth. The brackish regions of the delta where the waters mix can be turbulent. There are no roads through the Delta, but close to the Quarters fishermen cut small paths to the areas they harvest. Much of the Delta is hip-deep mud covered by a few inches of water. Throughout the Delta are landbars, strips of solid land which can be used as camping grounds.

The main vegetation is a waist-high, reed-like plant called kelva, which is similar to the Terran bamboo plant. It does not grow densely enough to restrict movement. The fields of kelva provide a flat, even horizon occasionally pierced by gvintch-bushes and bamboo. The pockets of Terran bamboo which do exist here are in constant struggle with the kelva. Gvintch-bushes grow on the small hillocks of reasonably solid land; meirsh know to look for gvintch in hopes of finding solid ground on which to set up camp. Gvintch bush looks like a small, gnarled tree with greenish-blue needle-like leaves. It grows to a height of about two meters. Its leaves are easily and quickly dried, providing a source of tinder for fires.

The Delta is teeming with life below the surface of the kelva. Many delicacies, including the bebic shellfish, live here. These are harvested in Mullin by fishermen. Bamboo is collected for craftsmen, and plants are bundled for sale to various limilate preparers. The most common limilate searched for in the Delta is arrigae, the small plant from which the healing limilate arrigish is derived. Also found in the Delta is the yellowish lichen "ambri" from which the expensive, memory-enhancing "ambreh" limilate is made. Ambri grows on kelva stalks near the waterline. It is very hard to find and notice (a -8 penalty on spot checks) as it blends perfectly with the kelva's stalk. It takes great quantities of this lichen to produce even a small amount of the limilate.

Not all of the inhabitants of the Delta are friendly. Several creatures make adventuring in the marsh a dangerous undertaking. Dhamarcs, the aquatic cousins of the dharmees, lurk under the kelva, waiting to sink their rows of spiny, sharp teeth into their prey. Sinthow dwell around outcroppings of solid, land like those near gvintch bushes. These poisonous water "snakes" are dangerous to humans and deadly to thombos. Floating in the water, usually when Ebba is high in the night sky, are the nemsis, or "Flowers in the Dark," masses of black algae and cilia which corrode and contaminate all they comes near.

The Delta is also home to many githerin and diyorda. Smugglers often bring their illegal wares through the Delta at night. It is even rumored that a large camp exists somewhere in the Delta's heart. Smugglers are said to haul in forbidden limilates, earthtec, and shanthic technology. The Chell is very interested in any information uncovered concerning such these activities. His office sends tauther out to investigate such rumors. This "swamp-duty" is much despised by tauther.

The weather of the Delta is subject to change. The high winds that blow off the bay sometimes blow over the taller bamboo. During Eris, the Cryshell sometimes flows heavily and cleans out the Delta. These flows can impact the ecosystem of the Delta, forcing fishermen to restake claim areas.

Occasionally, a combination river flood and high tide will cause many fish from the bay to become beached or caught in the kelva. Fisherman hurry to collect these "free yules" before they begin to rot. The southern portions of Ardoth sometimes reek with the odor of decaying fish. Storms can blow in suddenly from off the bay, and many fisherman and meirsh have lost their lives when the edges of the Delta suddenly became the new bay bottom.

Delta Creatures

Dhamarcs	Number Appearing: D3
Reaction	Obnoxious
Skin Armor	Leather
Advantage Bonus	0
Attacks, Type	2 claws and 1 bite
Damage for each	claws as knife; bite as bite
Speed	3d6
Attack Rank	13
Defense Rank	12
Defense Size	+0
Dyshas	-
Isho	-
Special	

Dhamarcs are the amphibious cousins of the dharmee. They are native Jorune creatures, and are very agile and fast. Their razor-sharp front teeth protrude from long, snouted mouths. They use their long claws to tackle prey. A thick, leathery hide covers the entire bodies of these creatures. Their colors range

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from mottled green-gray to a brilliant orange-black. Dhamarcs grow to about two meters in length. They move with surprising speed through the mud of the Delta, and many meirsh have been run down by dhamarcs. They often push themselves under the soft mud of the Delta, wait for prey to draw near, and then burst from the mud in a vicious attack. They have been known to wait in packs and attack a single target.

Nemsis *Flowers in the Dark," or "Ebba's Childe" Number Appearing: 1	
Reaction	Maniac
Skin Armor	None
Advantage Bonus	0
Attacks, Type	1 digestive juice
Damage for each	Special; see below
Speed	1
Attack Rank	14 (for initial attachement)
Defense Rank	N/A
Defense Size	N/A
Dyshas	-
Isho	-
Special	

Nemsis is the bane of all who spend time in marshes and swamps. It is a black algae colony which floats upon the surface of the water. Its black color matches the brackish waters (-4 to all Spot rolls). Its surface side is strangely beautiful, with ridges and petals which twine in fascinating patterns.

Nemsis floats along until a creature brushes past it or steps into it. When this happens, the mass flows around whatever passed through it and clings. The resulting attachment is called a "skin of nemsis." At every point of contact, millions of tiny, boring cilia are inserted into its prey. These cilia contain anesthetic fluids. When fully attached (a process of about 10 minutes on bare flesh, an hour when protected by clothing, and four to five hours for those wearing good hip-high, leather marsh boots), digestive juices secreted from its underside begin to flow into the wound. The mixture is then reabsorbed.

The victim will only notice the "skin" once it begins inflicting damage. Once attached it is almost impossible to completely remove, short of amputating the affected area. Any attempt to pull it off requires a Strength of at least 18, and removing it causes a major wound to that area. Fire will cause the "skin" to coil and react violently, and will injure the victim as well as the nemsis. Particularly potent malmiss is the best solution; a nemsis "skin" will wither and fall off if the affected area is soaked immediately for an hour. Any attempt to scrape or cut it off will cause a major wound to the body.

Damage is incurred by continued exposure to the digestive juice of the nemsis. The first half hour results in a superficial wound, followed in half hour increments by a minor wound, a major wound, a critical wound, and finally death. By the time of a death result, the affected area has been entirely digested.

New Items for Sale

Marsh boots: These thombo leather boots are reinforced and waterproofed. They offer the best protection against the nemsis and other marsh creatures. Customers have to be personally fitted for each pair. They provide leather armor protection to the legs. Wearing them reduces the wearer's speed by 2. Popular colors include black and red. 45 gemules is the price.

Trolling Pole: A two-meter pole used in finding the hidden bebic shellfish, and checking the path for nemsis and other creatures. A good pole is usually outfitted with leather hand grips, and crafted from treated hardwood (to resist water rot). A freshly cut bamboo pole is a cheaper alternative; a good trolling pole runs about 10 gemules.

Poison treatment kit: This handy kit includes all the items necessary to successfully treat a poisoned wound. It includes fresh razors, tourniquets and scedri cloth, all wrapped in a waterproof bag. It costs about 20 yules and can treat 10 bites.

Arrigae: This healing limilate is always in demand. A pound of fresh (gathered within a day) arrigae will fetch three yules. About 5 arrigae plants yield a pound.

Ambri: This yellow, memory-enhancing lichen is worth 1 gemlink a pound. Howevet, it is rare that anyone finds that much. It takes about 400 growths to produce a pound. Growths are 1 per kelva stalk, and patches are usually found in clumps of 20 to 40 plants.

Soft Cankle: The traditional variety of "reco candy" produced by the Copra-Shin Fadri Institute in Ardoth. A handful costs 1 gemlink.

Hard Cankle: Hard cankle comes from the Gauss Valley. It is easier to carry around and throw than the Institute-produced cankle. The recos seem to like it better, too. It carries a heavier price tag at 1.5 gemlinks.

Delta Skiff: This flat-bottomed craft is designed to navigate in the shallow waters of the Delta. Skiffs are necessary for any kind of fishing. A well-made skiff costs about 2.5 gemlinks.